

EDMONTON'S LABATT
BLUES FESTIVAL
AUGUST 19 • 20 • 21
2005

FRIDAY AUGUST 19

Curley Bridges

W.C. Clark

Koko Taylor and
Her Blues Machine

SATURDAY AUGUST 20

Mike Kindred

David Gogo

Mem Shannon and
the Membership

Downchild
Blues Band

Mannish Boys
featuring

Finis Tasby, Kid Ramos
and Johnny Dyer

SUNDAY AUGUST 21

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Craig Horton

Zac Harmon
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Steady Rollin Bob Margolin
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Koko Taylor
"Queen of the Blues"

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EDMONTON'S LABATT BLUES FESTIVAL 2005

AUGUST 19 • 20 • 21

How it All Goes Down

Y'all know that Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival brings you 3 days of "Blues and Nothin' but the Blues" but if you've never been to the show you might wonder how it all works once you get there.

Hawrelak Park has limited parking available on a "First come, first served" basis. We provide supervised motorcycle parking and you can lock up your bicycle in a rack if you pedal to the show.

The Heritage Amphitheatre has over 1150 fixed theatre seats under the huge tent that also house the stage and our dance floor, which can comfortably hold 500. If you prefer, you can relax on the manicured lawn. From our Labatt Beer Garden (capacity 1450) you can see and hear all the action on stage.

You'll find a variety of food and drink to help you keep diggin' the blues all weekend long. Louisiana Purchase brings "Soul in a Bowl" (Gumbo and Hush Puppies), we've got Funky Pickle's award winning pizza, Fat Frank's gourmet dogs and smokies, Bad Ass Jack's wraps and fries and Fantasia Gelato serves up specialty coffees, fresh roasted peanuts and gelato.

Make sure you visit our "Blues Store" and check out the selection of "Blues" wear and music from performers playing the festival. Performers will be happy to autograph those discs at the Autograph Table.

Message from the Producers

Our focus is to bring three days of "Blues and Nothin' but the Blues" to Edmonton every summer. From legends to the new bluebloods from across North America and beyond representing the many shades of the music we all love. Guitarists, piano players, singers, songwriters and harmonica players; acoustic blues masters and all the others who share this passionate love for the music make their way to Edmonton.

It's also our responsibility to introduce new talent to our audience. Shemekia Copeland, Paul Rishell and Annie Raines, Janiva Magness, Rod Piazza and the Mighty Flyers, Deborah Coleman, Tom Rigney and Flambeau, Marcia Ball, Dave Hole, Terry Hanck and many more made their Edmonton debut at the festival.

This year we present "The Queen of the Blues" Koko Taylor, multiple Grammy award winner Delbert McClinton and Texas blues from W.C. Clark and Mike Kindred, both of whom perform in Alberta for the first time at the festival. We'll also introduce you to Zac Harmon, who won the International Blues Competition last year, California supergroup, The Mannish Boys and the cab drivin' bluesman from New Orleans, Mem Shannon. Catch Muddy Waters band alumni Steady Rollin' Bob Margolin and Willie "Big Eyes" Smith with special guest the Reverend Billy C. Wirtz on Sunday.

Our aim is to present this music in an enjoyable atmosphere, where blues fans can congregate, dig the tunes and dance. It's a once a year opportunity to "Fill the Hole in Your Soul" with 3 days of the best the blues world has to offer. If you're a "Blues Hound" we know you'll be at the festival. We look forward to turning on new "Blues Pups" every year. Try it. You'll have a howlin' good time.

Don't miss your chance to say "hey" to Steve at the Blues Revue booth. Blues Revue is the "Blues Authority" so drop by, subscribe, and get all the blues news delivered to your door. Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival is the **only** Canadian Festival to host Blues Revue this year.

We couldn't put on this show without our volunteers, second to none, the cream of the crop of Edmonton's music volunteer community. Our blues hats are off to you 'cause you got mojo!

Carrol Deen and Cam Hayden
Co-Producers
Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival

The image on this year's commemorative T Shirt is Koko Taylor reigning "Queen of the Blues", photo credit Chris Jacobs.

Festival Lowdown

- ETS Park 'n' Ride from Stadium Parkade, U of A campus, 116 St. and 89 Ave. runs from 90 minutes prior to show to 1 hour after.
- Toonie to park, Loonie to ride the bus.
- Gates at 4:30pm on Friday, 1pm on Saturday and Sunday.
- Music from 5:30pm Friday, 2:30pm Saturday and Sunday. Show ends 10pm each night.
- No audio or video recording.
- No tarps or coolers.
- Chair policy: low back, low seat "beach" or "festival" chairs only.
- Please use trash cans, ashtrays if you smoke.

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Curly Bridges

Friday 5:30

Known as Canada's "Mr. Rock 'n' Soul", Curley Wilson Bridges was born February 7, 1934 in North Carolina, just outside of Raleigh. His father was a friend of Fats Waller and worked as a musician and farmer while his mother was a church organist.

Whenever Big Joe Turner or Louis Jordan would play Raleigh, young Curley would sneak into the clubs to catch a glimpse of his musical heroes.

He resolved to play piano after hearing the boogie-woogie of Albert Ammons, Pete Johnson and Piano Red. He made Washington DC his home and began absorbing everything he could from the red hot R&B and jazz scene of the area in the 1950's. He teamed with local musician Frank Motley in 1953, formed the Motley Crew and was the bands' pianist and vocalist for the next 13 years.

During that time he was also active as an arranger and session player and was the man behind the Big Mama Thornton recording of Hound Dog that was the obvious influence for the Elvis recording that came 2 years later.

Curley settled in Toronto in 1966 and worked as a session artist and fronted his own bands until moving to Barrie in 1981. There, he concentrated on doing solo gigs, delighting audiences with his mix of jump, jive and down and dirty blues.

In 1997 he played the Harbourfront festival in Toronto and was the hit of the weekend. Blues Beat magazine said of his performance, "Every good festival has a pleasant surprise, a revelation who brings down the house and blows you away...Curley Bridges wove a fabulous and entertaining set."



Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival is pleased to bring piano player and singer Curley Bridges to Edmonton for the first time. We're also proud of the fact that every festival has begun with great Canadian talent and this year is no exception. Curley will be joined by veteran Canadian bluesman and Electro-Fi recording artist Chris Whiteley on trumpet, harp and guitar, Victor Bateman on drums and Bucky Berger on bass.



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W.C. Clark

Friday 6:55

Wesley Curley Clark was born into a musical family in Austin Texas in 1939. His father played guitar and grandmother, mother and sisters all sang gospel in the church. "I had so much music in my soul", Clark remembers, "That all I had to do was pick up an instrument and play it." At 16, he got his first gig and before long he had joined the popular local band Blues Boy Hubbard and the Jets, where he had a six-year run. It was there that he met R&B hit maker Joe Tex, joined his band and started playing the "Chitlin' Circuit", where he learned the art of performing from the likes of James Brown and Tyrone Davis. Along the way, Clark perfected his ability to whip an audience into a frenzy.

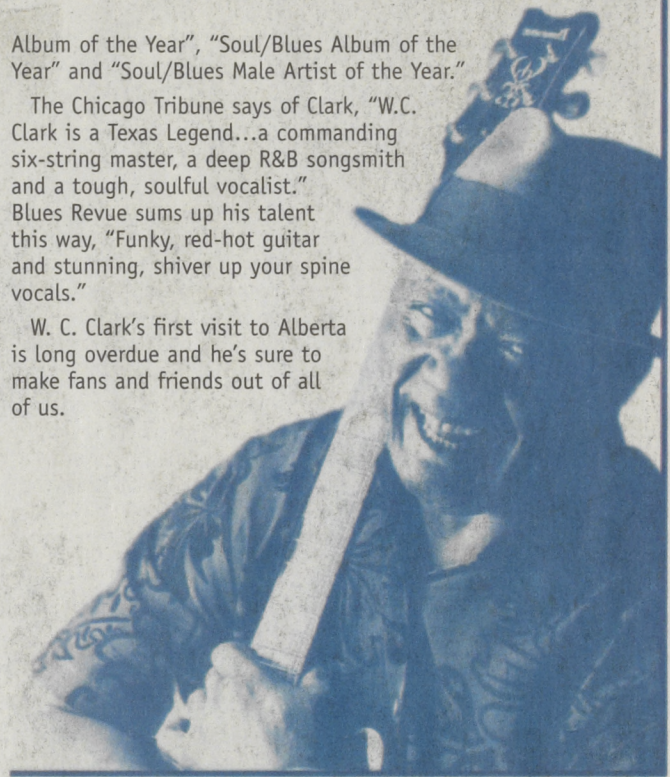
In the early 70's Clark formed his own band, Southern Feeling, along with Angela Strehli and Denny Freeman. He befriended Stevie Ray Vaughan and had Vaughan sit in with his band on many occasions. After Southern Feeling dissolved, Stevie Ray, who was determined to have W.C. in his band, courted Clark. Clark became the bass player in the Triple Threat Revue along with keyboard player Mike Kindred and vocalist Lou Ann Barton. Kindred and Clark co-wrote one of Vaughan's biggest hits, "Cold Shot", during this time and W.C. received a platinum record for his efforts.

W.C. has been fronting his own bands since the late 70's. He won the 1997 Handy Award for "Soul/Blues Album of the Year" and the following year the award as "Artist Most Deserving Wider Recognition". He won the 2003 Handy Award for "Blues Song of the Year"; and was nominated as "Male Soul performer of the Year" in 2004. W.C. was nominated for 3 Handy Awards this year: "Blues

Album of the Year", "Soul/Blues Album of the Year" and "Soul/Blues Male Artist of the Year."

The Chicago Tribune says of Clark, "W.C. Clark is a Texas Legend...a commanding six-string master, a deep R&B songsmith and a tough, soulful vocalist." Blues Revue sums up his talent this way, "Funky, red-hot guitar and stunning, shiver up your spine vocals."

W. C. Clark's first visit to Alberta is long overdue and he's sure to make fans and friends out of all of us.







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Koko Taylor & her Blues Machine

Friday 8:30

She is the undisputed "Queen of the Blues". "Blues is my roots", says Koko Taylor, "It's a true feeling that comes from the heart, not something that just comes out of my mouth. Blues is what I love, and blues is what I always do."

Born Cora Walton just outside of Memphis Tennessee, Koko was an orphan by age 11. A love of chocolate earned her the lifelong nickname "Koko". She developed an early love for music from a mixture of songs she heard in church and on B.B. King's radio show beaming in from Memphis. Her father encouraged her to sing only gospel, but Koko and her siblings would sneak out back with their homemade instruments and play the blues. Big Mama Thornton and Bessie Smith were big influences for young Koko, as were Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf and Sonny Boy Williamson.

At age 18 she moved to Chicago to look for work. After setting up house on the South Side, the cradle of Chicago blues, Taylor found herself cleaning house for a wealthy couple on the North Side of town. At night and on weekends she would visit the clubs and hear Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Magic Sam, Buddy Guy and Junior Wells. Before long she was sitting in with these same performers.

Her big break came in 1962, after performer/arranger/producer Willie Dixon heard her. Much to Koko's astonishment, he told her, "My God, I never heard a woman sing the blues like you sing the blues...That's what the world needs today, a woman with a voice like yours to sing the blues."

Over the course of her 40 plus year career, Taylor has received just about every award the blues world has to offer and then

some. She has won 19 W.C. Handy Awards (more than any other female blues artist). She's received Grammy nominations for six of her last seven albums and won a Grammy in 1984. In 1993, Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago honoured Taylor with a "Legend of the Year" award and declared "Koko Taylor Day" throughout Chicago in 1998. In 1998, Chicago Magazine named her "Chicagoan of the Year" and in 1999, Taylor was inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame. Rolling Stone calls her "The Great female blues singer of her generation."

You're invited to an audience with "The Queen", a legend and the possessor of one of the most recognizable and powerful set of pipes in the blues, backed by one of the hottest bands in the biz, her Blues Machine.



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San Diego Union-Tribune

Mike Kindred

Saturday 2:30

Mike Kindred is no ordinary blues pianist. He's penned a blues classic, worked with legends Stevie Ray and Jimmie Vaughan, Lou Ann Barton, James Cotton, Big Mama Thornton and Lightnin' Hopkins. He's toured extensively with Delbert McClinton, Johnny Clyde Copeland and Gatemouth Brown. While with the Joe Ely band in the 80's he shared stages with The Rolling Stones and The Clash. Through it all he has developed his own personal style that includes blues, jazz, gospel and rock.

And then there was boogie-woogie. "I've been playing boogie-woogie all my life it seems", says Kindred. As a teenager he founded his first band, Krackerjack, that featured the rhythm section of Tommy Shannon and Uncle John Turner. In Austin that band went through a succession of guitarists including Stevie Ray Vaughan. That association led to the Triple Threat Revue that featured Stevie Ray, Lou Ann Barton, W.C. Clark and Kindred. It was during this time that Kindred and Clark co-wrote the blues classic, "Cold Shot".

These days, you can find Kindred in Austin playing in a duo with drummer Dexter Walker. Their work together features original music by Kindred, along with his incredibly strong left hand, holding down the bottom end along with Walker's kit.

Together, they provide a trip through rolling barrelhouse, blues-rock, boogie-woogie, down and dirty blues and a touch of jazz that is original and extremely satisfying.

Jeff Calvin of Blues Revue magazine said of the duo's recording "Hand Stand" that, "It's a showcase for his two-handed chops...like all great boogie-woogie it teeters as it smokes along, threatening to go off the rails at any moment. It never does, and like all the great ones, Kindred makes it sound easy."

Mike Kindred makes his Alberta debut with drummer Dexter Walker in what will be a real slice of blues piano heaven.

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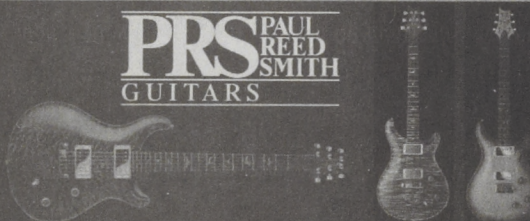
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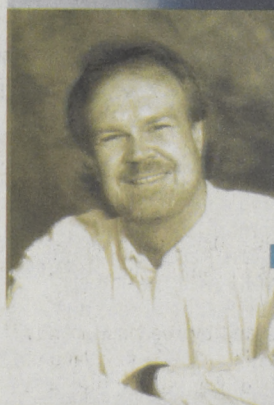
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Harmonica Shah Blues Band
Willie "Big Eyes" Smith

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David Gogo

Saturday 4:00

Hailing from Nanaimo British Columbia, David Gogo has made a big name for himself in Canadian blues in the relatively short time he's been on the scene.

David took up guitar at the age of 5 and by the time he was in his teens the blues had taken hold of him. "Stevie Ray Vaughan made it legit for a young guy to want to play blues guitar in a time when synth pop bands, big hair and tight pants was where everyone was at", he says. Gogo also had the great fortune to spend some time with the late, great Albert Collins. "I opened for him, worked with him and got to hang around with him. I learned what it took to be in the business...Albert was an incredibly generous man when it came to sharing his music, but he also booked gigs, drove the van and fixed it if it broke down. He was huge for me."

David learned his lessons well. He's toured the world, opening for the Fabulous Thunderbirds, B.B. King, Otis Rush, Johnny Winter, Little Feat and many others. He's won "Musician of the Year" honours at the West Coast Music Awards and real Blues Magazine named his recording "Skeleton Key", the top Blues/Rock CD of the year. He took home the "Blues Guitarist of the Year" award at the Maple Blues Awards in 2003 and 2005 and was also nominated this year as "Entertainer of the Year." Along the way he's released 6 critically acclaimed recordings.

Ken Mcgrath, writing in Sorted MagAZine in Ireland says, "I doubt there is another blues guitarist that can speak through his instrument quite like David Gogo can. This is music that demands attention and respect...Modern blues at its' best."

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Mem Shannon & the Membership

Saturday 4:00

A native of New Orleans, Mem Shannon spent 15 years ferrying people around the Crescent City from 8 p.m. to 4 a.m. while honing his blues chops. His music is full of the rhythms that are unique to New Orleans...funk, blues, R&B, soul and a touch of jazz while his original songs are full of the insights about life he learned on the job. In the decade since Mem Shannon broke onto the scene, he's expanded the definition of the blues. He's toured the world and shared the Kennedy Centre Stage with Gregg Allman, Buddy Guy, Koko Taylor and John Hiatt in a Muddy Waters tribute. He's performed at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival for 12 straight years, and played the King Biscuit Blues Festival, Waterfront Festival in Portland Oregon and the Montreal Jazz Festival to name a few.

The Washington Post said that..."Shannon is the blue's field's finest social commentator since the days of Willie Dixon and Percy Mayfield." Living Blues said, "Shannon should be considered among the foremost blues poets of his generation."

His song, "S.U.V.", won the Living Blues Critics poll award as "Best Song of the Year" in 2002 and Shannon continues to write original blues songs that cut to the core of contemporary issues with a twist of humour. His fifth album, "I'm From Phunkville", was released in April on Canada's Northern Blues record label and showcases his deep soulful voice, smokin' guitar work and insightful lyrics.

In short, he's got the goods. Shannon has never been to Alberta, but he's bound to leave a lasting impression on us all.



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Downchild Blues Band

Saturday 5:30

What can we say...Downchild Blues Band has been Canada's blues band for an astonishing 35 years. They were the inspiration for the Blues Brothers, have toured this country and many others, non-stop, entertaining hundreds of thousands of fans at clubs, concerts, dance halls and festivals and have had "Good Times Guaranteed" as their unofficial slogan (and the title of a 1994 album) along the way.

Mr. Downchild (Donnie Walsh) was inspired to form Downchild by the blues greats of Chicago in the mid-60's. He created a band that offered audiences exciting music that appeals to hearts, hands and feet with a unique, distinctive sound. Walsh's slide guitar and harmonica work, Chuck Jackson's vocals and the horn section of long-time members Pat Carey and Peter Jeffrey spark a sound anchored by the rock-solid rhythm section of Michael Fonfara (keys), Gary Kendall (bass) and Mike Fitzpatrick on bass.

Over the years, the band and its members have been honoured with awards and accolades too numerous to list. Highlights include a Juno and no less than a dozen Maple Blues Awards. Jazz Report awards as "Blues Band of the Year" and "Blues Musician of the Year" (Donnie Walsh), a lifetime achievement award from

the Windsor/Detroit Blues Festival, and the "Great Canadian Blues Award" for Donnie Walsh from CBC among many others. This year at the Maple Blues Awards, Pat Carey was named "Horn Player of the Year" and Michael Fonfara took home the "Keyboard Player of the Year" trophy.

Get ready to "Flip, Flop and Fly", on your way to the dance floor when Downchild hits the stage for the first time at Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival.



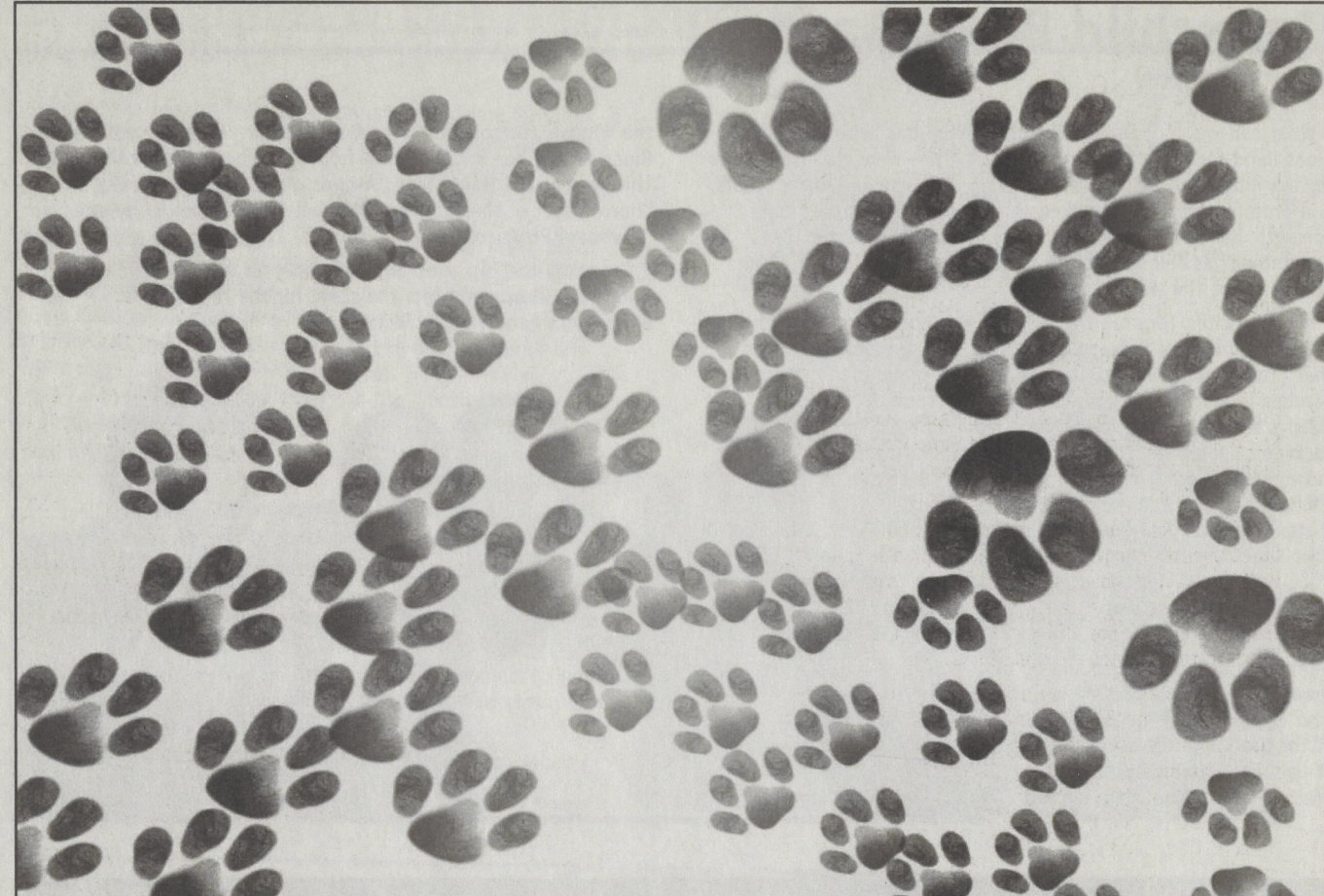
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Mannish Boys featuring Finis Tasby, Kid Ramos & Johnny Dyer

Saturday 5:30

The Mannish Boys are being hailed as one of the most exciting blues projects to emerge in many years, featuring some of the most dynamic blues talent in the world today, assembled from the absolute cream of the crop of West Coast blues veterans and youngbloods. The Mannish Boys are truly an "All-Star" assemblage in the truest sense of the word. Each member of the group has been acknowledged in the blues field as a master of his craft and all are in demand as session players and performers. In fact, entire blues festivals have been built around lineups with less star power than this single band.

Veteran Finis Tasby is the band's soulful frontman, with blues roots going back to 1940's Texas. Tasby excels at both down-home material and modern sounds and has series of his own highly acclaimed CD's, the most recent being "What My Blues Are All About" on Canada's Electro-Fi label.

Guitarist Kid Ramos is a mainstay on the Southern California blues circuit, bringing together the smooth style of T Bone Walker and West Coast swing and jump. With dozens of recordings under his belt as a leader and sideman, Ramos brings his "A" game every time. Kid was last seen in Edmonton as the guitarist in the Fabulous Thunderbirds.

Harmonica ace Johnny Dyer was born in 1938 and spent some time growing up on Stovall Plantation in Mississippi. He took up harmonica as a youngster and was influenced by Little Walter, Muddy Waters, and Big Walter Horton. He moved west to Los

Angeles in the 1950's where he fell in love with the sound of T-Bone Walker, Johnny Otis and Jimmy Witherspoon. The great George "Harmonica" Smith took him under his wing and before long Dyer was working with JB Hutto, Jimmy Reed and Jimmy Rogers. Dyer plays old school blues harp...no gimmicks, just straight-ahead blues from the heart.

Guitarist Frank "Paris Slim" Goldwasser's extensive resume includes stints with legends Lowell Fulson, Homesick James, Jimmy Dawkins and many others. He's toured the world and has put out a series of CD's fronting his own band.

Pianist Leon Blue has played with a who's who of blues and R&B legends for over half a century, including lengthy spells with The Ike and Tina Turner Revue, Albert Collins, Albert King and Bobby "Blue" Bland.

The hard-swinging rhythm section of drummer June Core and bassist Ronnie James Weber anchors them. Between them have provided support behind the biggest names in the blues including Charlie Musselwhite, Little Charlie and the Nightcats, Kim Wilson, The Fabulous Thunderbirds, Robert Jr. Lockwood and countless others.

Don't miss your chance to catch one of the hottest traditional blues bands on the planet, as The Mannish Boys make their Alberta debut at Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival.



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Mary Flower

Sunday 2:30

Mary Flower may be the best acoustic blues performer you've never heard of. The All Music Guide to the Blues says, "Unassuming blues heroine Mary Flower proves that she's one of the nation's premier finger-style blues guitarists...her technique is exceptional throughout, and in the end, serves the highest purpose, the music."

Mary began her performing career as a high school student growing up in Indiana. After moving to Denver in the early 70's she joined singing partner Katy Moffatt to tour the National College Coffehouse Circuit, then settled down to a local career as a favourite in Colorado. Two kids and twenty years later, she took to the road and gained national prominence.

The turning point was her appointment in 1993 as a visiting guest artist during blues week at Augusta Heritage Center in West Virginia. She's been back nearly every year since. She is a virtuoso of Piedmont style finger picking guitar and lap style slide guitar. She has a strong, clear, unaffected singing voice and writes refreshing contemporary blues songs.

Mary performs regularly at blues festivals and concerts throughout North America and Europe. She was a prizewinner at the National Fingerpicking Guitar Championship in 2000, the second woman in 27 years to place in the top 3. She's acted as a panelist at the W.C. Handy Awards in Memphis and is active in Blues in the Schools workshops for elementary and high school students. She has 5 critically acclaimed CD's to her credit along with a pair of instructional videos on finger style blues.

All Music Guide to the Blues has said, "Flower has been around as long as Bonnie Raitt, only without the major label contracts, the arena and the Grammy. She deserves to be known by at least as many people."

Meet Mary Flower when she brings her love of the blues, and her talent to share that passion, to Alberta audiences for the first time.



Craig Horton

Sunday 4:00

Oakland based blues guitarist and singer Craig Horton has been playing blues, R&B, jazz and Rock 'n' Roll for close to 50 years. He's worked with Chuck Berry, Sam Cooke, Dinah Washington, Otis Rush, Buddy Guy, Freddie King, Sam Myers and a host of others. Horton's sound is best described as heavy swingin', hard shufflin' classic blues laced with a stinging guitar attack and his deep, gutsy voice.

Horton's musical inspiration came from his family while growing up in Conway, Arkansas. His grandmother played guitar in church and introduced him to the instrument when he was a child. At 14, his grandfather gave him his first guitar. Early inspirations included Johnny Ace, Ray Charles, Willie Dixon, T-Bone Walker, Pee Wee Crayton and B.B. King.

In the late 50's he played in Little Walter's band and was a touring member of The Dells. He was also part of the Chicago music scene at the time, opening the Golden Dolphin Club while a member of both the Count Basie and Duke Ellington bands.

He's spent most of his career as a sideman but that all changed in 2001 with the release of "In My Spirit", his debut disc as a bandleader. Living Blues Magazine awarded the recording "Best Debut Album" in 2001 and Real Blues magazine saluted him with the "Patience is a Virtue" award that same year.

Tom Hyslop, writing in Blues Review, said, "Horton's a natural- a tremendous singer, biting guitar player and talented writer."

The Bay Area Blues Society named Horton the "2004 guitar player of the Year" and named his band the "2004 Band of the Year",



while Real Blues Magazine named him the "Top West Coast Live Performer" in 2003.

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Zac Harmon & the Mid-South Blues Revue

Sunday 5:30

Zac Harmon is a true disciple of the blues. Born and raised in Jackson Mississippi, he is dedicated to the music that he first heard in that city's historic Farish Street District, home of such blues legends as Elmore James.

While in his teens Harmon worked as a guitarist for the likes of Z.Z. Hill, Dorothy Moore, King Floyd and Sam Myers. After relocating to Los Angeles in the early Eighties he turned his attention to working as a studio musician and then as a writer and producer with a varied list of recording artists including Evelyn "Champagne" King, Brian Wilson and The O'Jays. While composing music for a movie score Harmon felt compelled to pursue his longtime dream to return to his roots and record his first blues project as a bandleader. In 2002 he released "Live at Babe and Ricky's Inn", his personal testimonial to the Mississippi blues.

In January 2004 Zac and his Mid South Blues Revue won the prestigious International Blues Challenge as the "Best Unsigned Blues Band". After winning the IBC title the band started performing across the United States at festivals, concert halls, clubs and on the legendary "Blues Cruise" winning fans with a combination of well-crafted original songs, musicianship, Harmon's signature vocal delivery and a liberal dash of humour.

"The Blues According to Zacariah" is Harmon's latest recording, released in April of this year. It marks Harmon's commitment to the blues and to keeping it real, as he works musical territory ranging from the juke joint to the pulpit.

Zac Harmon and his Mid-South Blues Revue are going to make believers of us all when they come to Alberta, and Edmonton, for the first time.

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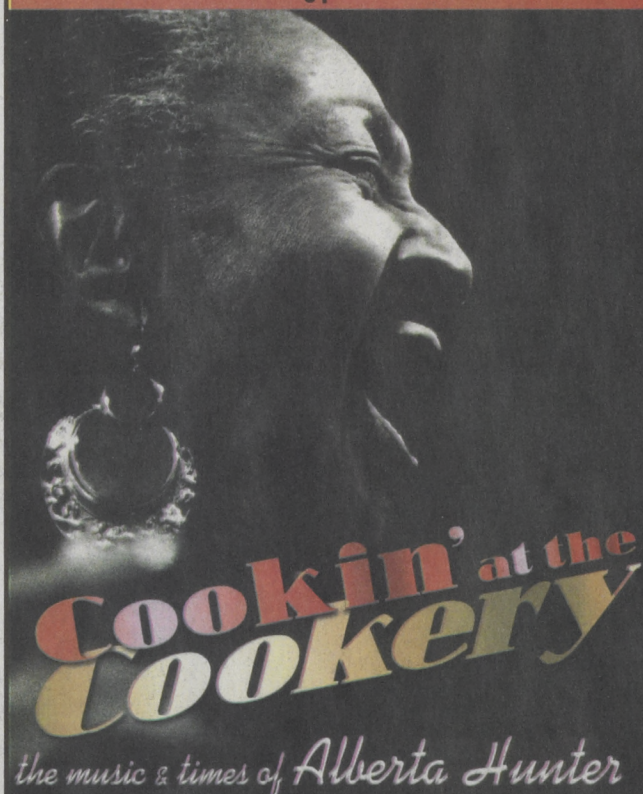
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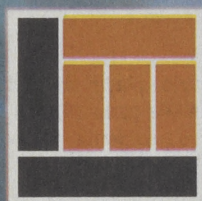
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'Steady Rollin' Bob Margolin with Willie 'Big Eyes' Smith & Rev. Billy C. Wirtz

Sunday 6:55

You've heard of a "twofer" or two for one deal...we are pleased to bring you a unique opportunity to catch a "threefer". "Steady Rollin" Bob Margolin, Willie "Big Eyes" Smith and Billy C. Wirtz are blues recording artists in their own right and have their own touring bands and schedules. They join forces for a rare group appearance at Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival.

"Steady Rollin" Bob Margolin was schooled in the blues by the best of the first generation of electric bluesmen, especially Muddy Waters. From 1973 through 1980 Margolin played guitar with the Muddy Waters Blues Band. During his tenure with Muddy, Margolin forged his own blues identity, while absorbing lessons from the master. He won four Grammy Awards while recording 10 albums with Muddy. Since then he's appeared on no less than two dozen albums as a guest musician and released six solo recordings. Margolin tours non-stop, bringing his own brand of Chicago blues, jump blues and swing to hundreds of thousands of blues lovers around the world and is regular contributor to Blues Revue Magazine.

Willie "Big Eyes" Smith is best known as the timekeeper for the Muddy Waters Blues Band, a post he held down for the better part of two decades. What many fans are now discovering is that Smith is also a talented harmonica player and vocalist. In fact,

Smith started his career as a harmonica player soon after moving from Helena, Arkansas to Chicago in the early 1950's. It was hard for a harmonica player in the late 50's so Smith moved to drums and joined Muddy's band in 1961. His most recent recording, for Canada's Electro-Fi label, is titled "Bluesin' It" and shows off his talents as a vocalist, songwriter and harmonica player as well as his steady work behind the kit that has earned him 7 W.C. Handy Awards as the "Best Instrumentalist - Drums".

Reverend Billy C. Wirtz is a very funny guy. In fact, he is likely the best blues comic in the world today. You're likely to hear a string of puns, killer boogie-woogie and barrelhouse piano and social commentary, all in the same song, at a Wirtz performance. A satirist and songwriter with a definitely politically incorrect edge, Wirtz is also legally ordained minister and writer who has penned pieces for Musician, Keyboard, and the All Music Guide. He's recorded nine albums since 1989; all laced with his singular take on the world. He passes on his voluminous knowledge of blues piano as part of the "Blues in the Schools" programs by day and plays "all those numbers I wouldn't dare play for your kids" at night.

It's a rare "Threefer" not to be missed at Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival.



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Delbert McClinton

Sunday 6:55

Rolling Stone magazine calls his music "Breathtaking, hardcore roadhouse rhythm & blues" and the L A Times types it as "Smoking, jumping big band blues and gospel rooted 60's soul honed to a razor-sharp edge in the Texas juke joints. Jalapeno hot!" Ask Delbert what kind of music he and his 6-piece band play and he'll say "Fun music".

Delbert was born in Lubbock Texas in 1940 and moved to Fort Worth at age 12. He still remembers his first brush with the blues as a teenager. "I was coming back from squirrel hunting and there was this old black barbecue place and I heard Joe Turner's "Honey Hush". The closer I got, the more excited I got. My heart went to pounding and I said, "Who is that and what is it?" I'll never forget that. There's no way I can explain it. I just went nuts. That stuff still does it to me." Delbert began to immerse himself in the local R&B scene, staying up late to listen to Ft. Worth's R&B station.

It was while playing in The Straightjackets, the house band for an all black blues club south of Ft. Worth, that Delbert got to meet and play with the legends he had heard on radio. Sonny Boy Williamson, Howlin' Wolf, Jimmy Reed, Bobby "Blue" Bland, he backed them all.

By the late 50's Delbert was making a name for himself around Ft. Worth. He made his first recording in 1960, a cover of Sonny Boy Williamson's "Wake up Baby" and he played harmonica on Bruce Channel's 1962 hit "Hey Baby", which soared to the top of the pop charts and spawned an English tour.

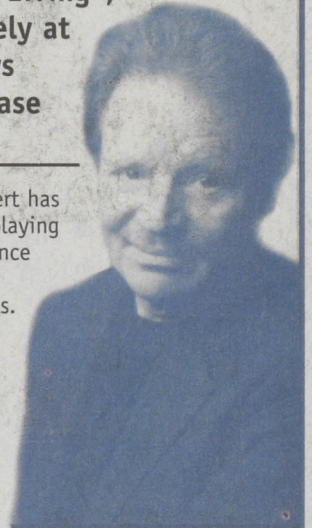
Delbert began honing his chops as a songwriter in the 1970's,

with his songs recorded by Emmylou Harris, Waylon Jennings and Doug Sahm. "B Movie Boxcar Blues" was used in the Blues Brothers movie. He's had two #1 Blues Albums with two others charting in the top 10. He's also won 2 Grammy Awards. The first in 1991 for his duet with Bonnie Raitt; and in 2001 "Nothing Personal" won the Grammy as "Best Contemporary Blues Album."

Delbert fans will also be thrilled that his new CD, "Cost of Living", will be available exclusively at the festival a full ten days before its' scheduled release date world wide.

It's as performing artist that Delbert has really made his mark. He began by playing roadhouses all over Texas and has since made his way around the world as a bona fide headliner at major festivals.

It's been nearly 15 years since Delbert has mesmerized Edmonton audiences with his singing, harp playing and crack six-piece band. It's definitely time to renew our acquaintance with one of the most dynamic performers on the scene.



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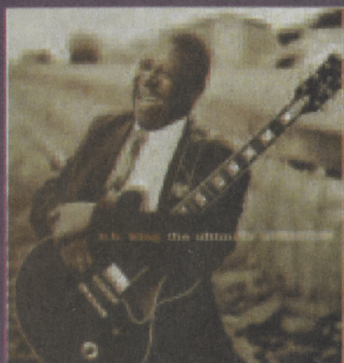
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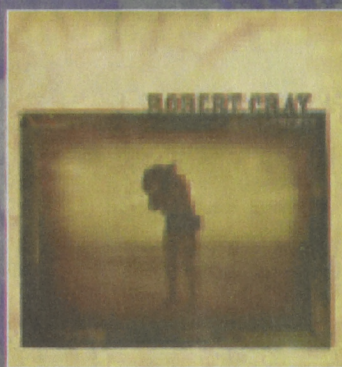
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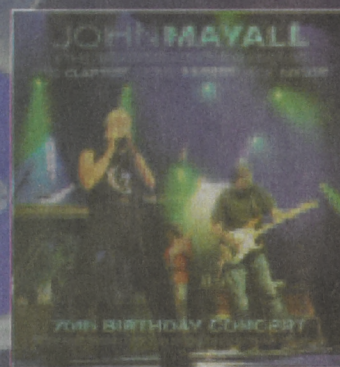
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